

Town of Sharon Planning Board

Minutes 3/14/24

Meeting held via ZOOM

Planning Board Members

Shannon McLaughlin, Chair	Pasqualino Pannone
Xander Shapiro, Vice Chair	Peter O’Cain, Town Engineer
Rob Maidman, Secretary	Sonal Pai
David Blaszkowsky	

Other Attendees

Brian Collins, Fin Comm, Joe Garber, ZBA, Georgeann Lewis, Arnold Wallenstein

Meeting Initiation

Chair McLaughlin called the meeting to order (via ZOOM) at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Blaszkowsky moved to accept the minutes of 1/4/24. Mr. Pannone seconded the motion and the Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of approval.

MBTA Zoning

The Board reviewed the takeaways from the 3/12/24 public outreach presentation. These thoughts for changes included moving height from 4 to 3 stories, off-street parking, limit mixed use in residential sections on the map, move pieces of the district to distribute throughout town – look at feasibility if it would work like Shaw’s Plaza, Heights, and Route 1.

Mr. Maidman expressed it is worth considering other zones being mindful of other considerations like water and sewage access. Look at Cobb’s Corner which would need more study before consideration phase.

With reference to height, Mr. Maidman said it struck a chord in people. If we can achieve the theoretical calculation and remain at 3 stories, then consider.

With parking he said if we have more impervious spaces, make sure taking away space does not impede density.

Mr. Pannone supports Mr. Maidman’s thoughts. If you look outside ½ mile radius look to meet spirit of intent to make a walkable community. Heights, Cobb’s Corner less convenient to train and doesn’t support as strongly.

Mr. Pannone said maintaining the height to 3 stories is the right approach. More than 3 stories are out of character for the center of Town.

Mr. Blaszkowsky said he is glad to hear the thought to move to multiple districts. Need better understanding of developable lots in Town. We are committed by the State to define capacity to build and not build. We need a solution that's right for Sharon. We need to do our homework. Parking is a different need to address. Multi story should not be at 4.

Mr. Shapiro said to proceed to lower the stories from 4 to 3 for building height. It makes sense to move mixed use outside P.O. Square, adding another area like Heights or Shaw's Plaza. He wants to go to Town Meeting in May to get a vote.

Mr. O'Cain said that Ms. Pai has done a lot of analysis and Heights Plaza is Zone 2 and therefore can't be used. Shaw's Plaza has a big blow up of housing coming.

Chair McLaughlin said that a reduction from 4 to 3 stories is good. With reference to parking spaces with a recommendation of a maximum of 2, Chair McLaughlin asked if there were any objections to change to 1.5. She said locations in other zones need to be determined if feasible. She asked if there could be a mixed use limitation in residential areas if feasible. Mr. Pannone commented that mixed use should be limited to Business District A.

Mr. Shapiro summarized by stating the Gallery is off the table. There is Shaw's Plaza, High Plain Street, Route 1 and Cobbs Corner.

Mr. O'Cain said Route 1 is Zone 2 which is ground water protection district.

Ms. Pai said if you change the map you need to change language and start over again.

Chair McLaughlin said look at it from the feasibility of the parcel. Important when we go to Town Meeting need to know why an area would work or not. Let's talk about each area and its feasibility for zoning.

Joe Garber said Edgehill Road went from 40 B to 20-unit LIP.

Mr. Pannone said can we adjust maps and provide alternatives next year? This would give us more time.

Ms. Pai said she will find out if we can change the map after voted on.

Chair McLaughlin said Route 1 is groundwater protection district. Gas Station on North Main and Gallery are already approved projects. What makes it preventative because being planned or built? Town Counsel needs to be contacted for this answer.

Ms. Pai said a parcel needs to be 5 acres to fit criteria. Heights and Shaw's Plaza Are Zone 2, High Plain near Church and Walmart is outside Zone 2, its Rural 1 single family zoned.

Arnold Wallenstein of the ZBA said you cannot change once its reset.

Mr. O'Cain said the Gallery is not in the mix.

Georgeann Lewis, 264 Edgehill Road asked for clarification of what groundwater language means. Mr. O’Cain said Zone 2 is in the groundwater protection area. The language excludes Zone 2 drinking water is protected by State standard.

Ms. Pai said so we can look to Cobb’s Corner, High Plain and Chair McLaughlin will follow up with Attorney Gelerman regarding the gas station property on North Main and the Gallery.

Business District A

Ms. Pai showed the language and reviewed the minimal changes that need to be done.

Acceptance of Lily Lane and Juniper Road extension

Mr. O’Cain said on behalf of the Select Board and as part of the legal process, the Planning Board has to accept the public ways. The next step will be a Public Hearing before the Select Board and then move to Town Meeting. He said the water, gas and electric are in on these streets.

Mr. Blaszkowsky moved to recommend to the Select Board the acceptance of Lily Lane and Juniper Road extension. Mr. Pannone seconded the motion and the Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of approval. Mr. O’Cain will draft a letter for Ms. McLaughlin to sign as Chair.

Future Topics

Meeting format - ZOOM/Hybrid

Next Meeting Dates

3/21 Public Hearing, 3/28 Joint meeting with Library Reuse Committee, 4/2 Solar Projects

Adjournment

Mr. Blaszkowsky moved to adjourn at 8:55 PM. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of adjourning at 8:55 PM.